DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 102 137 SP 008 919

TITLE	Indiana University Alternative School Teacher Education Program.
INSTITUTION	Indiana Univ., Bloomington. School of Education.
PUB DATE	74
NOTE	48p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.76 HC-$1.95 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS	*Alternative Schools; Preservice Education; Public School Systems; *Teacher Interns
IDENTIFIERS	*Distinguished Achievement Awards Entry

ABSTRACT

As public school districts have begun to develop optional alternative schools, a common concern has been where to find trained teachers to staff the schools. For the past four years Indiana University has worked closely with several of these school districts in developing a field-based teacher education program to prepare new teachers for these schools. The student will spend two summers on graduate course work, with the time in between spent as an intern in an alternative public school. By the time the program is completed, teachers will have demonstrated their ability to do the following: (a) conceptualize the kind of teachers they want to become and develop and complete a program of self-development designed to move them toward that, (b) develop a comprehensive rationale for alternative education and be able to describe and critique the types of alternatives in operation today, (c) obtain a field internship, (d) complete an internship in an alternative public school, (e) create and implement a new educational component for the public school district in which they are interning, (f) participate in the professional development of future interns, and (g) obtain a position in public education. The program also has a number of important objectives related to creating and maintaining new alternative schools and programs. (A list of cooperating public schools, an illustration of a field-based center, a program description, and an external program evaluation are included.) (PB)

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Distinguished Achievement Award Entry

Indiana University School of Education

Alternative School Teacher Education Program

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Indiana University Alternative School
Teacher Education Program
(Overview)

As public school districts have begun to diversify their programs through the development of optional alternative schools, a common concern has been where to find trained teachers to staff the open schools, schools-without-walls, learning centers, continuation schools, free schools, multi-cultural schools, and schools-within-schools that they are designing and developing. Often these new schools demand entirely new roles and new skills for teachers. During the last four years several of these public school districts have worked closely with Indiana University in developing a field-based program designed to prepare new teachers for these new alternative schools being developed in public education.

The Alternative School Teacher Education Program, a master's degree program in secondary education, has developed a relationship of mutual assistance with cooperating alternative public schools. Now in its third year of operation it remains the only program of its kind in the nation. The program provides certified teachers an opportunity to prepare for new roles in alternative public schools while completing the master's degree. For the cooperating public schools, the program provides a resource of trained graduate interns and university professors to assist the school districts in planning and operating new alternative schools. The schools then become field training sites for the graduate students during a year-long teaching internship. And local personnel agree to assume a major responsibility for the supervision and professional development of the interns. In turn, the interns are given the opportunity to participate in the planning, development, implementation, and operation of these new public school alternatives. Resident teachers in the local alternative schools are also given the opportunity to participate in the master's degree program. This unique relationship between Indiana University and cooperating public schools has led to the creation and support of new alternative schools in sixteen public school districts in ten states, while simultaneously developing a small corps of trained professionals available to assume support roles in the area of optional public education.

Indiana University Alternative School
Teacher Education Program

I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A. Background: As public schools have begun to diversify their programs through the creation of optional alternative schools, one common concern has been shown to first trained and experienced teachers to staff these new schools and programs. Administrators have discovered that there are few teachers available with experience and training in alternative schools and that "good" teachers in conventional schools do not necessarily make an effective transition into the alternative environments. What an entirely "new" conception of "teacher" is needed to operationalize these new schools and programs. Since 1970 a number of public school systems throughout the country have worked closely with Indiana University in developing teacher education programs designed to prepare new teachers for the new schools developing in public education.

B. Program: The Alternative School Teacher Education Program, cooperatively developed by participating public schools and I. U., is a field-based masters degree program. The program is designed to be completed in one calendar year. Students spend two summers on campus pursuing graduate course work. In between these summers, students earn internship and independent study credits while working for an academic year in an alternative public school. The program involves 9 to 12 hours in graduate work in the student's teaching area, 9 to 12 hours in courses in alternative education, 12 hours in an internship experience, and 3 to 9 hours in electives or independent study. The sequence of course work is organized into four phases:

Phase I: Personal Exploration: Working closely with I. U. faculty members, students conduct an intimate self-examination and self-exploration. Throughout this process, students are encouraged to consider what kind of teachers they want to become.

Phase II: Surveying Alternative Schools: Students conduct a survey of

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is directing the Center for World Studies, while two others are co-directors of the district's Adult Special Education Program. Of the twelve 1973-74 interns, eight were employed as teachers; one became director of the District Office for Planning and Evaluation; another is coordinator of a community education program.

During the past three years the interns have served on a district Task Force for Alternative Schools, been commissioned to develop plans for twelve new alternative schools, perpared funding proposals, conducted a district-wide drop-out survey, and assisted in evaluating alternative programs. They have made presentations at both regional and national conferences in the Midwest.

Thus, during the past three years the Grand Rapids Public Schools and Indiana University have joined together to develop a number of new alternative schools and programs and simultaneously have developed a highly trained corps of professionals in the area of alternative education.

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Indiana University Alternative
School Teacher Education Program

M.S. in Secondary Education
Emphasis on Alternative Schools

Co-Directors

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Indiana University

1974-75

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Background:

During recent years, public school systems throughout the country have begun diversifying their educational programs by developing a wide variety of alternative learning options. Today over 500 alternative public schools in over theirty states are now in operation; Mario Fantini has called this development the "only major movement in American education today." The concept of developing alternative public schools has gained impressive support; it has been recommended by the 1970 White House Conference on Children, the 1972 President's Commission on School Finance, and by a number of prominent educational leaders: James Coleman, Dwight Allen, John Bremmer, Kenneth Clark, and John Gardner. Alternative public schools have also been the focus on special issues of most of the major educational periodicals -- Harvard Educational Review, Phi Delta Kappan, Education U.S.A., Nation's Schools, NASSP Bulletin, and The Elementary School Principal. They have also drawn the attention of Time and Newsweek. So established has the idea become that the North Central Association is now developing guidelines for evaluating alternative schools.

The types of alternative public schools that have been developed represent a complete spectrum of learning environments. The following outline suggests the variety:

Open Schools
with learning activities individualized and organized around interest centers within the classroom or building

Schools Without Walls
with learning activities throughout the community and with much interaction between school and community

Learning Centers, Educational Parks, Magnet Schools
with a concentration of learning resources in one center available to all of the students in the community

Multicultural Schools, Bilingual Schools, Ethnic Schools
with emphasis on cultural pluralism and ethnic and racial awareness

Behavior Modification Schools
using programmed learning, external rewards and individualized study

Street Academies, Dropout Centers, Pregnancy-Maternity Centers
with emphasis on learning programs for students in targeted populations

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Schools-Within-a-School
could be any of the above organized as a unit within a conventional school

Integration Models
could be any of the above with a voluntary population that is representative in racial, ethnic, and socio-economic class makeup of the total population of the community

Free Schools
with emphasis on greater freedom for students and teachers. This term is usually applied to non-public alternatives, but a very few are operating with public school systems today

New Teachers for New Schools

As public schools have begun to diversify educational environments through the creation of alternative Free Schools, Open Schools, Schools-Without-Walls, Street Academies, Drop-out Centers . . .and the wide variety of new optional educational experiences listed above, the one most common concern of local educators is where to find trained and experienced teachers to staff these schools and programs. They have been quick to discover that there are very few teachers available who have experience in non-conventional education, and even fewer universities that have training programs to prepare teachers for these new positions. Administrators have also found that "good" teachers in conventional schools do not necessarily make an effective transition into new educational environments, and that teachers without some kind of re-training tend to "burn out" at a rather high rate. Far more disturbing, educators have begun to realize that an entirely "new" conception of "teacher" is often needed to operationalize many of these new schools and programs. When alternative public school administrators met in 1972 at the Kingspread Conference on Alternative Schools, they discovered few college and university training programs that related to their staffing needs. They concluded their meeting by calling for the creation of a completely new kind of teacher training program for both new and experienced teachers who desire careers in alternative public schools. Since that time, school officials in a number of public school systems throughout the country have worked closely with Indiana University in developing an alternative school training program.

Indiana University and
Alternative Schools

A number of unique situations have made Indiana University the nation's primary center for the study of alternative public schools. The National Consortium on Options in Public Education was founded and is housed at Indiana University. The Consortium newsletter, Changing Schools is likewise published here. A continuing series of meetings, workshops, and conferences on alternative schools are hosted annually by Indiana University

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Of equal importance is the Consortium resource file on alternative public schools, which includes program descriptions, evaluations, and research reports. All of these components combine to make Indiana University an attractive site for a training program in the area of alternative schools.

Teacher Education as Self-Actualization:

The Indiana University Alternative School Program was cooperatively developed by university and public school administrators and teachers. It is a completely individualized, field-based program of teacher self-actualization. The program consists of a small faculty team, flexible courses, maximum independent study, and extensive field teaching experience. As such it represents a sharp distinction from conventional teacher training programs.

The Alternative School Program is designed for people interested in a career in alternative public schools. The program is designed to help participants develop a theoretical and conceptual background in alternative schools, survey a wide variety of different learning styles and learning environments, and attempt to prepare themselves for a particular role in alternative public schools.

Students who enter the Alternative School Program at Indiana University are encouraged to clarify their own values and career goals, articulate their personal philosophies of education, and diagnose their own capabilities and liabilities as teachers. This means that students conduct an intensive self-examination and self-exploration of their personalities, skills, interests, and problems. Simultaneously, the students survey a wide variety of different teacher-roles and learning environments through intensive readings, on-site visits to alternative schools, and continuing discussions with alternative school personnel. This survey involves comparative analysis of the various kinds of curricula and teacher roles found in alternative schools. Throughout this process, students try to match their own unique capabilities and philosophies to teaching roles in specific types of alternative school learning environments. In this sense, students are continuously encouraged to identify what kinds of teachers they want to become. As such, this movement toward self-actualization is as much a process, as it is a program. Once a student has identified the kind of teaching role he or she wishes to pursue, the student is assisted in organizing an individualized program of self-development designed to actualize and maximize personal potentials for obtaining the desired teaching role. Students are helped to identify competencies, skills, and experiences which they feel they 'need' and to select learning activities that are compatible with their personal teaching goal.

Alternative School Program:

The Alternative School Program includes a minimum of 36 graduate hours and culminates in an M.S. in Secondary Education. The program is designed for certified teachers with a bachelors degree. Specific program components are as follows:

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I. Teaching Discipline(s) (9-18 hours). A minimum of 9 hours of graduate work must be completed outside the intent of Education in at least one of the student's teaching areas. Some students may elect to have an additional 9 hours in another teaching area.

II. Course Work in Secondary Education (9-12 hours). The following courses are designed to fulfill this component of the program. Six of the hours in this component must be in courses with an alternative school focus (EDSS, EDSC, EDCS, EDAS).

1. EDSS - Analyzing Alternative Schools (3 hours). This course reviews background factors in education associated with the development of public school options, examines several operational models, studies the procedures involved in starting options, uses case studies of operating schools as a basis for examining principles and issues, and analyzes evaluation models and procedures.

2. EDSS - Analyzing Alternative Teacher Styles (3 hours). This course provides an opportunity for students to critically analyze and compare traditional classroom teaching roles developed in relation to a wide variety of educational settings.

3. EDCS - Secondary Curriculum (3 hours). A central emphasis of this course will deal with use of general principles to synthesize theory to analyze conventional and alternative school curricula.

4. EDAS - Alternative School Workshop (3 hours). Special workshops will be offered during summer intensive sessions (3 1 weeks). These workshops will emphasize a different topic each session.

5. An alternate schools course in secondary education may serve to meet this requirement: EDSS, EDCS, EDCT, EDSE, EDAS, and EDSP.

6. Other courses in secondary education such as EDCS, EDSE, and EDPT.

III. Individualized Options (3-12 hours). This part of the program permits each student to pursue his specialized needs and interests through independent research and readings not oriented around work. Independent research in secondary education is available for students who wish to pursue more [illegible] interests in topics chosen in consultation with a faculty advisor. Courses may be taken in or out of the intent of Education.

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IX. Graduate Field Experiences (3-12 hours).

1. Field Experience Concepts. The field learning experience is one of the basic components of the University Urban Teacher Training Program. Each student will wish to do alternative schools for a specified period as this is not only both beneficial but often times adds value when seeking employment in an alternative school. Generally, duplication of the field experience setting, when possible, is not desirable in that one has to start a whole at a totally different alternative or a complete different school, where one is learning how to establish rapport, learning the school/community. For example, if the specific objectives, students will seek school and alternative school administrators, teachers, students, and parents, start a variety of different types of alternative schools, work in task forces, and be placed with as many varied experiences as possible.

Since one has major emphasis for choosing graduate experiences in alternative schools. Internships and Individuals. The Internship and Practicum are designed as alternative experiences to fit the needs of graduate students, and are not taken by the same student.

a) Internships. Certified teachers may participate in an internship of 9 units for 1 hours graduate credit, a semester for 6 hours graduate credit, or a full academic year for 12 hours graduate credit. In each instance a student will be involved experiences and interviews in alternative schools. These internships are from 1,000 to 1,200 approximately half a teacher's salary, and are paid by cooperating school district. During this time graduate students engage in in-depth analysis of the school, community, and their own teaching role. This activity will be included in an action-research report along with samples of their work, personal observations, and a thorough reflection of their own personality in interaction as a teacher. Students are also required to [illegible] of independent teaching/research being and interesting procedure.

b) Individuals. Certified teachers who are currently employed in an alternative public school are eligible to apply for alternate graduate experiences and 12th graduate credit. This involves an independent project of teaching, observation and analysis of teaching experiences, curriculum development, research projects and analysis. The graduate experiences with teacher's University faculty. In those schools where formal University courses are evening, the graduate may be required to [illegible] with the U.S. staff and school

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An Evaluative Case Study of the Alternative Schools Program Division of Teacher Education Indiana University

Prepared under the auspices of the
Indiana Center for Evaluation
Indiana University at Bloomington

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November, 1974

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Introduction

When evaluating teacher education programs with potential broad scale impact as the Alternative School Program, a conscientious effort is needed to find the forces which shape the program, to understand the nature of the opposition encountered, to perceive the way different groups or individuals have supported or participated in the program, and to determine what happened and why. The overriding question in an evaluation of broad based teacher education programs is not only "do they work," or even, "how successful were they" (Although these questions have obvious significance) but rather, "what happens when such programs are introduced?" In other words, the evaluation must not only judge the worth of the program's efforts, but more importantly, ought to promote significant understanding about the way such programs provide quality experiences for their participants, and how they affect developments in teacher education.

This evaluation perspective was utilized in the evaluation of the Alternative School Teacher Education Program, one of the thirty new programs in the Division of Teacher Education, Indiana University. The program is committed to preparing students to teach in public alternative schools throughout the country. These alternative schools reflect the growing discontent and alienation of a number of professional educators with traditional modes of educational practice. The schools selected to be part of this program are those noted for excellence in alternative education. Students who comprise the program take several seminars at Indiana University in both theoretical and practical aspects of alternative education, and then complete a one year field oriented internship in one of the participating alternative schools. After successfully completing the coursework and internship students graduate with a Master's degree in secondary education, emphasis on alternative education.

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This evaluation describes both the development of the Alternative Schools Program and the way it is currently perceived by those who participate in it. History lends perspective. Description enhances understanding. This evaluative case study attempts to illuminate an understanding of a teacher education program, and share the perspectives of those who helped shape it. As a case study it may be of some value to those interested in developing new programs. The value to the staff and students of the program can only be understood in terms of an opportunity to view themselves, engage in introspection, and learn from not only what they accomplished, but what they failed to accomplish as well.

The evidence used to reconstruct this history and provide the description comes from a whole array of documents including letters, interdepartmental memoranda, proposals, brochures, newsletters, course descriptions and evaluations and samples of student work. Additionally, and perhaps, most significant, is the testimony solicited from faculty, administrators, interns, alternative school personnel, pupils in those schools, administrators in the various districts, and parents in the communities. Members of the evaluation team conducted a series of site visits to each school where program interns were placed.

The evaluation not only produced understanding of the way the program developed and the problems encountered through its historical developments, but most specifically, it produced understanding regarding the quality of the experiential training component. The format of this report stresses aspects that have been judged to be important in both the development and operation of the training experience. What interns do; how they spend their time; the problems, frustrations and anxieties they encountered; what they learned about education in alternative settings; and how various people

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viewed the experience from their own individual perspectives--these issues are among the program aspects illuminated by the evaluation effort.

I. SUBJECT PERCEPTIONS

As it is important to understand the history of a program, it is also important to understand how people who are involved in it or somehow affected by it perceive its value. It was our belief that in order to fully understand people's perceptions the evaluation effort would have to extend to all sites where interns receive their individual field experience. Comprehending the subtle feelings that people express continually evades the sensitivity of the instruments utilized to measure such subtilities. We believe that, contrary to an excessively narrow interpretation of the scientific rules of objectivity, people are efficient and effective information processors, and therefore are themselves superb measurement instruments. This evaluation effort has profited from the willingness to use human ability to collect, store, and integrate information, and to render judgments based on that information. The data on the quality of the interns' experiences does not result from psychometric assessment, which is oftentimes artificial and replete with measurement error, but rather is based on informed human judgment provided by the program staff, interns, school district personnel, and students and parents in the Alternative schools.

It takes only a modicum of sensitivity to see that the range of experiences provided to the interns in the Alternative Schools Program far exceeds the kind of opportunities available to most student teachers in more conventional teacher preparation programs. They have helped plan, develop, and implement new programs in outdoor education, behavior modification, open education, and a variety

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of other diversified areas. They have served as staff members during the planning and first year of a number of alternative schools. As such, they have had to develop new courses, plan curriculum, create policy and participate in the entire range of problems and pressures that accompany the starting of a new school. They have worked in public relations, made presentations to boards of education, parent groups, and at professional meetings, confronted, consulted, and worked with superintendents of schools; and have been elected to serve on task forces and community governing boards. They have written funding proposals, developed detailed plans for new schools, conducted research and needs assessments, and have helped to evaluate the alternative schools they have taught in. They have directed community internship programs, drug abuse programs, and created and taught a wide variety of courses. They have taken inner city kids camping, taught pregnant girls child care and nutrition, accompanied students on extended field trips across the country, and gone to court to keep kids out of jail. They have negotiated learning experiences for their students in court houses, jails, hospitals, television studios, and social agencies. They have started student-directed radio shows and helped kids obtain weekly columns in local newspapers. They have also come in conflict with school administrators and regular staff members.

Despite the variation of their individual experiences all of the interns are forced to take themselves seriously and continuously introspect about their teaching. They also have all had great responsibility, and were considered to be contributing members of the schools' staff.

The following comments reflect the sensitivity and thoughtfulness they have given to their individual experiences, and represent the variations of moods and concerns that the training program engenders:

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In many ways this past semester has been a disappointment but it is something I can deal with, change, and improve. In many other ways these past few months have been really exciting. I have met and worked with some dynamic people and some who have become close friends. I have had a chance to work with the big men on the Board of Education and write a proposal for a new alternative program. Most importantly I have had a chance to talk to people in my field, to be exposed to their work, and to exchange ideas. The interns met, and discussed common problems and goals and finally started to organize and get ourselves together. We made an initial big step of trying to get past our basic communications problems and stagnation. We got together about three times in ten days and exchanged ideas and feelings. It seemed we excited each other and as a group produced enthusiasm. Before that we all were starting to become settled in our own little jobs and beginning to lose sight of our long range goals and explorations. We are now becoming entrapped with possible studies we will be involved with and the chance of really making an impact on the public schools--especially the alternatives.

Intern, Grand Rapids, Michigan

When I was still at Indiana University, I thought...(as intensely) I was going to be a breeze. I had read Holt, Herndon, Kozol, Postman and Weingartner and as far as I knew I was ready. I had many questions concerning the field of education to be sure. But I had read those books and I had talked to--listened to people and I had the answers....
All of the books I read are fine. I'm not getting down on those books or their authors. My point is the: they can mislead you into thinking you'll be able to step right in and solve your problems one-two-three....You get in an alternative school with your Holt in hand and discover the rest is failing in. Teach me ideas about changing the educational world, is what I am saying. Don't let any book or anyone mislead you into sitting off more than you can chew. If you come here thinking you're going to take everything under control because you've read some book or talked to some people, then you're in for a surprise.
Before I left I.U. I knew how children learned and how they failed. I knew why so many children start mentally at an early age, why most were not hooked on books. I could have told you all about de-schooling, open-schooling, no-grade-non-thing-schooling, and free-schooling. I knew all about Piaget and Dewey and Montessori but brothers I'm telling ya, that first week here, I knew shit.

Intern, Grand Rapids, Michigan

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I have requested and having read more into information on alternative schools and open education before serving here. On a recent, I have been forced to admit it is that because being an employer such for the school. It would have helped even if I had put a stamp in a few alternative schools to which -- their address was not available at the time. The first I made to Crown Square (and they was delighted but I received more expectations like that. I hope to convey this personal point somewhere in writing which does have to reach all the other alternative schools in America.

Johnson, Beatrice, Washington

As far as my personal feelings from Mrs. I can honestly say that I have never been engaged in a more rewarding occurrence. The challenges and rough and few ones in this thing and in times very frustrating, but all in all I like what I'm doing. At times I really begin to believe in Parsley's law -- if nothing is as easy as it looks, it probably takes longer than you think. I if anything are go wrong it will. But in general, the experiences I have had so far have been invigorating and meaningful.

Johnson, Grand Rapids, Michigan

I have talked to give some second glances for the records for will because most--well many of those have names and kids. If you are not totally committed to doing the best job for them they know. If you have this to going to be a lot and some kind of a game that just forget it. If you are not willing to learn, be flexible and grow into [illegible] to work and my have, then you can also forget it. We will [illegible] my have for to going to think and forget and [illegible] right the way things are. This allows to not for existing when it comes to students, and for some goes for centers.

Johnson, Grand Rapids, Michigan

I feel that I have been challenged to the old degree in this job. But only when I teach my subject area, but I try to be active [illegible] personality problems as classes and records, be activity [illegible] which are very popular as may not be necessary), a newsletter, a number of personality [illegible] the magazine from people from other schools, etc.), a part time [illegible] drawers and taking their backup [illegible] and a little bit of just about everything else discussed in the Action Guide for Learning Alternatives.

Johnson, Beatrice, Washington

[illegible]

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[illegible]

[illegible]

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> I was an intern, now I teach in the same school. My experience during my internship was invaluable but I never felt like I was part of any program. The Director is the program. If you are tight with him you're okay--but if you don't get along--watch out!
>
> Former intern, Louisville, Kentucky

> There is no real information press coming from I.U. they seldom ask for evaluative data regarding the intern's development. Making them think we (the alternative school personnel) should be responsible for evaluating and monitoring the growth of the interns. Well to a large extent we are. But ultimately the I.U. staff is responsible and they should interact more.
>
> School Director, Seattle, Washington

> Several interns over the last few years have commented on the lack of efficient communication within the program. When individual interns talk with the Director about program requirements they think they understand. But then, when they talk to other interns, many discrepencies become apparent.
>
> School Director, Louisville, Kentucky

These statements reflect a growing concern among participants in the program and the issues that emerge should be addressed immediately. If left alone, communication problems will not go away. They usually will magnify and precipitate program debilitation. In the following section the data will be synthesized briefly, and several suggestions will be offered for program remediation.

II. BEYOND THE DATA

This phase of our efforts attempts to synthesize what has been learned during the course of this evaluative study, and on the basis of our limited observations provide some suggestions, conclusions, and recommendations.

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It is clear that engaging in this kind of program involves a high risk commitment both personally and professionally. This is true for faculty initiating, implementing, and operating the program as well as for interns who are trained in it. Earlier, the difficulty of institutionalizing this program was illuminated. In essence, faculty members were putting their careers on the line, and were working against traditional reward criterion. Interns, on the other hand, and placed in situations where the pressure to perform successfully is great. Most Alternative Schools, and this is true of the schools participating in this program, operate in a crisis mode. If money gets tight then it is usually the Alternative School which suffers. There is always pressure on those schools to perform beyond the expectations for most traditional schools. They are forced to do more evaluation, and their evaluation is usually more public. Inexperienced interns often feel that they could personally damage a school if their performance fall below par. Part of this results from inflated expectations, but part is quite real. There is a great deal of personal and professional pressure on these interns, and they feel it.

Even more of a reason to congratulate all involved. The commitment, dedication, energy, and enthusiasm were pervasive factors in every conversation we had with anyone involved in or affected by the training program. In part, the problems which emerged from this evaluation effort, are related to the commitment, dedication, and enthusiasm.

The program director, for example, has invested a great deal of himself in this program over the last four years. There appears to be an unwillingness to delegate some of the responsibility for making certain kinds of decisions to other participants. Perhaps Alternative School Directors can assume some

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additional adjunct status, and participate more in programmatic decision making processes. The school directors could form a quasi-advisory group and meet periodically to help formulate program policy. In spite of the cost of such an effort, new program thrusts could be added in a more systematic fashion, rather than being left to pure chance. Perhaps former interns could be part of this advisory group as well. This would add another dimension that would enhance the credibility of the decision making process. This suggestion should not imply that input from school personnel or interns is not currently solicited. But rather, it is offered so that more structured, formalized ways of proceeding be created at a time when intra-program communication is being questioned.

Additionally, it may be helpful to develop more systematic ways of nurturing communication between the interns and the program director, and between the interns themselves. No field interns suggested that the program director was inaccessible, in fact many stated that he could be reached by telephone quite easily. They felt comfortable calling him, and did so when the situation warranted it.

But the communication we are talking about is the more systematic kind. It is not the crisis management variety that currently seems to dominate. Perhaps monthly conference calls to interns in the same city would facilitate communication not only back to I.U. but also with interns who do not have the chance to interact much even though they work and live within a reasonable proximity to each other.

Another suggestion might be a structured letter writing assignment. Every two weeks or so each intern would have to write a letter to an intern in a different place. Lists could be created to insure that people would write to different people each time. The purpose of the writing would be

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more professional than personal. Interns would describe things they had been doing in their respective schools, problems that emerge, successes, etc. In addition to sending the letter just written, interns would also send along letters they just received. This would keep everyone informed on more than a random basis what was occurring at other sites, and how other interns were getting along. Although this procedure sounds rather cumbersome, it may really facilitate meaningful communication across interns. Of course, the program director could be involved as well as a means of continuously monitoring the feelings and expressions of the interns about their work and their experiences.

It is reasonable to suggest, however, that despite the problems expressed by interns and others regarding communication, the program is better off with a flexible, unstructured, crisis-management posture. Perhaps certain communication problems are the necessary trade off for having a program that is field based, open, and responsive. Perhaps the ambiguity is good for the interns. And perhaps they should learn to be resourceful in communicating their needs and aspirations to the program director, as well as being resourceful and flexible in the classroom. At any rate, the issue exists and warrants further thought and deliberation on the part of those involved.

One other matter still exists, and it deals with the continuing evaluation of the Alternatives School Program. This issue implies not only program evaluation, but intern evaluation as well. The final section of this document presents some suggestions for comprehensive evaluation strategies.

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III. EVALUATION COUNSEL

There are two levels of evaluation that must be attended to. As stated, the program should be evaluated on the basis of whether its short and long term goals are currently being realized. The program has graduates that are working in alternative schools. Follow up studies could be created to assess the impact of the training program on its graduates. This type of effort would be extremely useful in terms of helping to identify weaknesses in the program which could be accounted for in future planning. This type of evaluation would be more of a summative nature, not necessarily looking at the program after its completion (the usual temporal distinction for summative evaluation) but rather looking at the program in its complexity, attempting to understand its full import. The evaluative case study provided here is an example of the type of summative evaluation we recommend. Time should be spent studying and evaluating different aspects of the program in greater depth, and relating those aspects to one another. Looking at the integrity of the relationship between the course work at I.U. and the field experience is one such effort that would be worth undertaking.

In addition to these broadscale evaluation efforts, the program seems to suffer from a lack of systematic formative or operative evaluation--that is, evaluation aimed at providing information to all concerned so that the program can be continuously improved upon in a way that has fidelity to the diverse groups involved (I.U. staff, resident and intern students, outside agencies, alternative school personnel, school district administrators, and children and parents in the alternative educational setting). A more commonly used term for formative evaluation is feedback. This feedback represents a type of operative evaluation for monitoring, trouble-shooting, crisis-managing, the

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elimination of problems that arise, and the making of decisions with the least harmful consequences. This sort of evaluation should not be aimed at assessing success, but rather at understanding a specific program. It should not only be oriented toward the goals and objectives of the program but at recognizing shortcomings, potential and realized. It should be aimed at identifying choice points, the alternatives available, and the implications of each alternative. This kind of evaluation should result in a meaningful and continuous dialog, not only among the program staff, students and interns, but with outside groups as well.

It became clear throughout the majority of interviews conducted for this study that the program's central themes, goals, or specific objectives were diffuse and inconsistent. It may be important at this phase in the program's development to reconstitute itself. To rethink what its core goals, objectives, operational and administrative strategies ought to be. Much has been learned in the past four years, and it is not clear how those lessons have led to a new program philosophy or a reaffirmation of what has existed. Program reconstitution adds vitality to developing efforts and prevents against erratic meticulousness. The program began as a thrust against the status quo. And it should continue to check itself against the very criteria used to initiate its creation four years ago.

More specifically:

> 1. Program staff (including cooperating alternative school personnel) should periodically reassess their goals, objectives and expectations. At such intervals the staff can also note whether their specific goals are being achieved, what evidence they use to make such judgments, or whether goals are being replaced with subsequent goals and anticipations. Reasons for such modifications should be fully explained. This kind of data collection procedure is useful in allowing the director (and all staff) to better understand the nuances of the group, the kind of dialogue that exists, and the direction that the program essentially takes over time.

[redacted]

[illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [